



News Release

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Georgia Military/VA partnership grows with the addition of South Carolina

FORT GORDON, Ga. – The newly renamed Georgia-Lina Federal Healthcare Executive Council, which serves as a partnership between the Military and the Veterans Affairs medical treatment facilities to provide better access to care for patients, has added the [William Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center](#) and the [Moncrief Army Community Hospital](#) to the group to further improve access to health care.

The Eisenhower Army Medical Center, Fort Gordon, Ga, originally partnered with the Carl Vinson VA Medical Center, Dublin, Ga., and the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center, Augusta, Ga.

Now with the addition of William Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center, Columbia, S.C., and the Moncrief Army Community Hospital, Fort Jackson, S.C., the opportunities for cooperation between the medical facilities will increase.

“This is a fantastic opportunity,” said Timothy McMurry, Director, Dorn VAMC, “to expand Veteran and Military beneficiary services by partnering VA Health Care Systems with DOD Medical Treatment Facilities. Both organizations understand the unique health care needs resulting from military service.”

The GFHEC was chartered in January 2012 to provide Military and Veterans patients with faster access to health care by allowing the health care facilities to refer patients at other locations that may have open appointments or other specialty care services that are unavailable at their facility.

The charter created a governing body to manage the joint health care services and explore Army and VA opportunities between EAMC, Charlie Norwood VA, and Carl Vincent VA.

The group includes military medical center commanders, VAMC directors, liaisons, and five workgroups for clinical and business operations, quality of care, communications and

public affairs, information management, and the Integrated Disability Evaluation Process (IDES).

Col. John Lamoureux, EAMC Commander and GFHEC Chairman, said “This partnership stands as an example of the future of military and VA medicine.”

Since the agreement, the inpatient services provided to VA patients at EAMC has increased over the last three years. From fiscal year 2012 to 2013 the number of cases has increased by 30 percent and in fiscal year 2014 the workload increased by 42 percent.

Outpatient services, which include same day surgeries, provided to VA patients at EAMC also increased by a 58 percent in fiscal year 2012 and by 47 percent in 2014.

Over the last three years, CNVAMC has provided 1,032 Dublin Veterans with hearing tests, balance tests, and hearing aids; in fiscal year 2014, CNVAMC provided over 250 neurosurgical services to DOD beneficiaries.

“We have a shared interest in caring for our nations Service Members and Veterans and this cooperation allows us to reduce appointment backlogs, keep our physicians fully engaged, and most importantly provide the best care possible for our patients. “

EAMC maintains one of the largest heart programs in the Department of Defense (DOD) and has provided cardio thoracic surgery for Augusta area Veterans since 1989 and the CNVAMC maintains one of seventeen VA Spinal Cord Injury Units and one of thirteen VA Blind Rehabilitation Centers that support this region.

Under the GFHEC agreement, Veterans now account for over 50 percent of all cardio thoracic cases performed at the medical center which gives Augusta area Veterans immediate access to life-saving procedures at EAMC. EAMC averages between 90 and 106 open heart surgeries per year between DOD and VA patients.

Lamoureux states that recently the Rand Corporation visited EAMC to research the GFHEC because the GFHEC is the country’s largest DoD/VA sharing partnership.

In short term referrals, the program has recently allowed Veterans to be seen for 61 endoscopy procedures, 713 AAA ultrasounds, 25 PET Scans, 100 audiology appointments, 200 urology appointments.

Also under the program, a 2013 orthopedic and rehabilitation services project was approved as a collaborative effort to provide 175 joint replacement surgeries and other non-traumatic orthopedic inpatient and ambulatory surgery for Veterans.

Patients undergoing orthopedic procedures that require inpatient rehabilitation services are sent for post-operative rehabilitation at CNVAMC before returning to home and outpatient physical therapy is provided through both VA medical centers.

